



# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

## CERTIFICATION DIRECTIVE

*(NFPA 472 2008 Edition)*

**Department of Public Safety  
5700 E. Tudor Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507  
(907)269-5052**

[www.firestandards.alaska.gov](http://www.firestandards.alaska.gov)

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## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIRECTIVE OVERVIEW

The Hazardous Materials certification directive is based on industry standards and was developed to provide Alaska fire service agencies with a method to attain knowledge and skills for hazardous materials response activities. The directive is referenced to [NFPA 472](#), Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents, and is intended to provide a standard level of hazardous materials training through a credible program.

The Alaska Fire Standards Council ([AFSC](#)) is accredited through the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress ([IFSAC](#)) and provides certification for Hazardous Materials Awareness and Hazardous Materials Operations levels. Training for either level is typically available through TEB accredited fire department programs. A practical and written examination is administered to ensure applicants have met the requisite knowledge and skill requirements within the NFPA standard.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIRECTIVE LEVELS

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness (HMA)**

Awareness level personnel shall be persons who, in the course of their normal duties, could encounter an emergency involving hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and who are expected to recognize the presence of the hazardous materials/WMD, protect themselves, call for trained personnel, and secure the area. Awareness level personnel shall be trained to meet all competencies of NFPA 472, Chapter 4.

### **Hazardous Materials Operations (HMO)**

The operations level responder shall be that person who responds to hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incidents for the purpose of protecting nearby persons, the environment, or property from the effects of the release. The operations level responder shall be trained to meet all competencies at the awareness level and the competencies of NFPA 472, Chapter 5.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness (HMA)**

- a. applicant must be at least 18 years of age, and;
- b. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
- c. \*successfully complete an AFSC/TEB approved HMA course, and;
- d. \*successfully complete the AFSC written HMA examination with a minimum score of 70%, and;
- e. \*successfully complete the AFSC practical HMA examination.

***\*Note:*** The course requirement and the final examination requirement must be completed within **three years** of application date and must meet NFPA 472 core requirements.

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## **Hazardous Materials Operations (HMO)**

- a. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
- b. applicant must meet all requirements for HMA (*NFPA 472 Chapter 4*);
- c. \*successfully complete an AFSC/TEB approved HMO course, and;
- d. \*successfully complete the AFSC written HMO examination with a minimum score of 70%, and;
- e. \*successfully complete the AFSC practical HMO examination.

*\*Note: The course requirement and the final examination requirement must be completed within three years of application date and must meet NFPA 472 core requirements.*

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS COURSES**

To be eligible to take the certification exam for Hazardous Materials, applicants must have completed an approved training course. Training courses are offered through TEB, or, through fire department training programs that have been accredited by TEB before the course start date. In reference to NFPA 472, 2008 edition, the Hazardous Materials course must meet the knowledge and skill requirements for chapters 4 and 5, and mission specific sections of chapter 6. Fire departments or organizations conducting a TEB approved course must follow the requirements of the [Training Program Accreditation & Course Approval Manual](#). Courses are taught throughout Alaska in various locations.

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EXAMINATIONS**

The Fire Standards Council has developed a written examination test bank for each level of certification. The Hazardous Materials Awareness examination has a total of 25 questions; and the Hazardous Materials Operations examination has a total of 100 questions. Hazardous Materials certification examinations are typically administered immediately following an approved course. For certificate issuance, written examinations must be completed with a score of 70% or higher. There is a two-hour time limit for the final written examination. In the case that the hazardous materials tabletop skill scenarios are done in the same sitting as the written exam, an additional two-hours will be added to the written examination time limit.

For regions with reasonable access to TEB training centers, the TEB staff will proctor written examinations. In cases where an individual is eligible to test, but is not able to test with a group, examinations *may* be mailed to an approved AFSC Certifying Officer (CO) upon request. If a CO is not available in the local community, the AFSC office *may* authorize the exam to be mailed to an approved individual in the applicant's community.

Exam distribution procedures shall follow the Test Examination Security Plan specified in the [Certification Policy Manual](#). Examinations must be completed returned to the AFSC office in accordance with the manual guidelines and timeframes. Examinations **shall not** be sent directly to the individual taking the exam. The AFSC office will grade all certification examinations and notify the applicant of final scores.

## **Hazardous Materials Written Examination References**

- a. NFPA 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2008 edition
- b. Text (any one of the following)
  - IFSTA, *Essentials of Firefighting and Fire Department Operations* 5<sup>th</sup> Edition
  - Jones and Bartlett, *Fundamentals of Fire Fighter Skills*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

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- Delmar, *Firefighter's Handbook*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Supplemental Sources for Hazardous Materials Instructional Materials (not necessarily required by the student; these texts could be used by the instructor to supplemental learning material). It **is not** recommended these sources be used as a stand-alone preparation for final written examination,

- Delmar, *Hazardous Materials Handbook*, 1st edition, 1st printing
- Delmar, *Hazardous Materials Incidents*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1<sup>st</sup> printing
- IFSTA, *Hazardous Materials for First Responders*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1 printing

### **Hazardous Materials Practical Skills Evaluation References**

- a. NFPA 472: *Standard for Competence of Responders to Hazardous Materials/Weapons of Mass Destruction Incidents*, 2008 edition
- b. Hazardous Materials [Awareness](#) and [Operations](#) Practical Skills Evaluation Sheets

Additional sources required for practical application:

- Department of Transportation, *Emergency Response Guidebook*, 2008 edition
- NIOSH, *Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards*, Sept 2007, edition (Silver/Grey Cover)

## RECIPROCITY

The AFSC can certify individuals for Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations through reciprocity. Reciprocity is available to an individual who has completed his or her certification through an entity accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress ([IFSAC](#)) or the National Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board ([ProBoard](#)). Reciprocity requirements for certification are as follow:

### **Hazardous Materials Awareness Reciprocity Requirements**

1. applicant must provide an [Application for Certification](#), and;
2. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
3. applicant must submit a copy of IFSAC or ProBoard Haz mat Awareness certificate to the AFSC..

### **Hazardous Materials Operations Reciprocity Requirements**

1. applicant must provide an [Application for Certification](#), and;
2. applicant must be an Alaska resident or member of an organized fire department or an emergency response organization registered with the Division of Fire and Life Safety, and;
3. applicant must submit a copy of an IFSAC or ProBoard Hazardous Materials Operations certificate to the AFSC.

*Reciprocity applicants must meet all AFSC requirements for each level of certification.*

## EQUIVALENCY CHALLENGE

To initiate the challenge process, an individual must have documentation of completion of a hazardous materials training program. The AFSC will only accept Hazardous Materials challenge applicants if he or she is affiliated with an Alaska fire department or organization with an accredited firefighter training program for the level of the challenge request. All challenge requests must be coordinated through the fire department the individual is affiliated with. The fire department Training Officer/Accreditation Manager has the responsibility to verify the

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applicant meets the requirements for testing and must complete and sign-off a Hazardous Materials Training Record before the applicant is eligible to complete an AFSC certification exam.

Applicants that have been endorsed by a Training Officer/Accreditation Manager can complete an approved hazardous materials examination locally, but an examination will not be scheduled for a single individual. If no test opportunity is possible locally, applicants can contact the AFSC office for information on other certification test sites.

A candidate **is not** permitted to attend a final exam at an alternate test site without the explicit preapproval of the AFSC office *and* the agency that is authorized for the exam. To test at a site other than his or her fire department, the challenge candidate must:

1. have permission from the agency that is scheduled to test
2. provide evidence of AFSC written approval to test
3. provide photo ID
4. provide a completed training record signed off by the candidate's Training Officer/Accreditation Manager
5. have a complete set of firefighter bunker gear (PPE) that meets NFPA standards
6. have a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) that meets NFPA standards

### BACKGROUND CHECKS

A background check is not required for certification at the Hazardous Materials Awareness or Operations level.

### RECERTIFICATION

AFSC Hazardous Materials Awareness or Operations certification does not expire. It is the responsibility of the individual to maintain knowledge and skill requirements after the certification examination is completed.

### PREVIOUS ALASKA HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CERTIFICATION/GRANDFATHER CERTIFICATION

The Alaska Fire Standards Council recognizes all previous State of Alaska certifications issued for Hazardous Materials Awareness or Operations through the Division of Fire and Life Safety (formerly Division of Fire Prevention).

Due to ongoing changes with NFPA certification standards, grandfather requests for IFSAC seals are limited. For individuals that received certification prior to initial State of Alaska IFSAC accreditation, the AFSC policy for "Grandfather" certification with an IFSAC seal will expire upon the adoption of the third NFPA standard revision after the individual's initial certification was issued.

This clause does not prohibit an individual that was certified in Alaska prior to 2001 from receiving an IFSAC seal. Individual IFSAC seal requests for a certificate issued three or more revisions ago will be required to successfully complete a current written and practical test before issuance of an IFSAC seal.

There is no grandfather option for ProBoard seals.